

COVINGTON COUNTY

Honorable Frank “Trippy” McGuire

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PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To increase positive parental involvement in the lives of Covington County children
2. To provide more substance abuse prevention in Covington County. Raise public awareness by bringing the message to the people of the County. Decrease drug usage in Covington County
3. To decrease the amount of child abuse and neglect.

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.

Health - Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

Births to unmarried teens

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Increase awareness of pregnancy prevention program by working in conjunction with the local health department, agencies, and media
- Encourage "Baby Think It Over" program in schools
- Continue to explore funding opportunities for promoting and developing teen pregnancy prevention programs

Impact of drugs on health

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Continue Operation Save Teens program for all county schools
- DARE program for elementary age students
- Explore options for adolescent drug treatment programs for this county

Reliable transportation to appointments

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Increase funding for affordable transportation to medical appointments
- Increase awareness of need for affordable transportation

Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Substance abuse prevention/intervention

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Raise public awareness-take the message to the people
- Develop/foster/facilitate access to treatment
- Promote/facilitate parental involvement/concern

Child abuse and neglect

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Promote/facilitate parental involvement in counseling and training
- Network the court system with existing programs to achieve #1 above
- Increase resources to achieve #1 and #2 above

Education - Children learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Qualified tutoring (affordable or free)

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Website or homework helpline for parents and children
- Expand tutoring in after-school programs
- Peer to peer tutoring program

Lack of parental involvement

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Parenting classes
- Increase parent participation in parent organizations
- Opportunities to involve parents in learning how to teach their children

Lack of importance placed on education

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Create a mentoring program for at-risk youth
- Helpline for parents and students

Early Care and

Education - Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Quality childcare

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Continued training for child care employees
- Partnering with junior college and Partnership for Children to get workers scholarships
- Educate parents on quality child care

Parenting

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Publicize the importance of birth to five development
- Develop program in child care centers or home visitation to train parents on how to stimulate development
- Provide social/educational opportunities for families with young children

School readiness

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Concentrate on Issue 2 above to involve parents in preparing their child for school
- Establish learning zones for preschool children and their parents at agencies where services are provided
- Support and expand reading program offered through Covington Pediatrics Rural Health

Economic Security

- Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Lack of communication between county employers and potential employees

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Serve on publicity committee for job fair
- Coordinate transportation with faith-based organizations for job fair
- Provide child care during job fair

Lack of current child-care resource directory

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Survey County to determine child-care providers including night care providers
- Publish a directory of providers
- Make directory available to other agencies and the public

Parent Involvement and Skills

- Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Lack of parental involvement in educating young children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Develop programs for parents that stress the importance of parents as educators
- Develop programs that stress the involvement of both parents in a child's life

Lack of parental involvement in positive social activities with their children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Encourage local churches to develop social outreach programs for family involvement
- Family to family mentoring

Policy Recommendation

1. Increase funding for after-school programs.
2. Address issues of relatives as child care providers.
3. Funding for rural public transportation.
4. Increase funding and opportunities to develop family resource centers.
5. Leave Children's First money alone.
6. Pass legislation to make a crime for children to be in a drug environment.
7. Support legislation that makes it a crime to injure a fetus.

Additional Covington County Children's Policy Council Members:

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